

SMOKE DETECTORS SAVE LIVES

Did you know that:

- 80% of all fire fatalities occur in residences
- Most fire fatalities happen during sleeping hours
- Most fires originate in non-sleeping areas

A smoke detector emits an alarm when triggered by any amount of smoke. It may be your first warning of a fire in the home. Fires produce toxic gases and smoke that actually numb the senses so you cannot rely on your own senses to detect a fire.

It is recommended that smoke detectors be installed on walls (4" to 12" from the ceiling) or on ceilings (at least 4" from walls). Place detectors in bedroom areas, the dining room, the furnace room, the utility room and the hallways.

Test and clean your smoke detectors at least once a year; check you batteries monthly and replace weak ones immediately. A smoke detector can save you and your family's lives, but remember, it has to be in working condition to do that.



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Home Fire Safety Guide



Don't give fires a place to start!

GOOD HOUSEKEEPING

- ✓ Install smoke detectors in your home.
- ✓ Keep clothing and curtains a safe distance from the stove or heater.
- ✓ Keep ashtrays around the house and never dump ashes in a wastebasket.
- ✓ Never let combustible materials gather around a liquid gas storage tank.
- ✓ Check that all electrical cords in your home are not frayed or worn. Never use multiple attachment plugs or run wires under rugs.
- ✓ Do not keep oily rags in the house or garage without storing them in tightly covered containers.

YARD MAINTENANCE

- ✓ Remove all combustible rubbish, debris and flammable vegetation (leaves, standing grass, brush, etc.) from the yard.
- ✓ Remove all leaves from your roof and trim any dead limbs found hanging over the house.
- ✓ Make sure the ½" mesh screen on your chimney is in good order and that there are no trees or branches within 10 feet of it.
- ✓ Keep roof ladders available.

SENSIBLE PRECAUTIONS

- ✓ Keep matches out of reach of small children.
- ✓ Never store or use gasoline as a cleaning agent.
- ✓ Never use candles or matches to illuminate dark closets, attics, or basements.
- ✓ Use caution when smoking at home and while driving in forested areas.
- ✓ Do not turn on lights or light matches when the smell of gas is noticeable. Open windows and ventilate the house and turn off gas at the meter or tank.
- ✓ Plan escape routes to places of safety for family and pets.

FOR FREQUENT REVIEW

- ✓ Know how to call the Fire Department (for emergencies, dial 911).
- ✓ Discuss the importance of safe fire practices with the entire family.



HOW TO PROTECT YOUR HOME WHEN CAUGHT IN A WILDFIRE

Millions of Californians live in residential developments that border fire-prone wildlands, and each year hundreds of these homes are lost to wildfire outbreaks. As many as 80% of the homes lost to wildfires could have been saved if the owners had followed a few simple fire safety practices.

If your home is threatened by wildfire, you may be contacted by a fire or law enforcement official and advised to evacuate. However, if you are not contacted in time, or if you decide to stay with your home, consider the following:

Be properly dressed to survive the fire. Wear long pants and boots, and carry with you for protection a long sleeved shirt or jacket, gloves, a damp handkerchief to shield your face, and goggles.

OUTSIDE YOUR HOME:

Remove combustible items from around the house.

Close outside attic, eave and basement vents, if possible. This will eliminate the possibility of sparks blowing into hidden areas within the house.

Locate garden hoses so they will reach any place on the house. Use the spray-gun type nozzle, adjusted to spray.

Place large plastic trash cans or buckets around the perimeter of the house and fill them with water. Soak burlap sacks, small rugs and large rags. They can be helpful in beating out burning embers or small fires.

Place a ladder against the roof of the house opposite the side of the approaching fire. If you have a combustible roof, set a lawn sprinkler on it. Do not turn on the water ahead of time, as wood shingles will dry quickly and you will have wasted water.

INSIDE YOUR HOME:

Close all windows and doors to prevent sparks from blowing inside, but do not lock them. If firefighters arrive to help save our home, they may need instant access.

Close all doors inside the house to block the circulation of air and movement of fire from room to room.

Open the damper on your fireplace to help stabilize outside/inside pressure, but close the fireplace screen so sparks will not ignite the room.

Turn on a light in each room of the house, on the porch, in the garden and in the yard. This will make the house more visible in heavy smoke and at night.

Fill bathtubs, sinks and other containers with water. Toilet tanks and water heaters are important water reservoirs.

Shut off gas at the meter.

If you have time, take down drapes and curtains.

Move overstuffed furniture away from windows and sliding glass doors and into the center of the house.

YOUR VEHICLE:

Park your car in the garage, heading out; close car windows; leave keys in the ignition.

Close the garage door but leave it unlocked. Disconnect the automatic garage door opener.

Place valuable documents and mementos inside the car in the garage for quick departure, if necessary. Any pets still with you should also be put in the car.

WHEN THE FIRE IS AT YOUR HOME:

Enter your home with your family, closing but not locking the doors. Keep the entire family together and remain calm. Remember, if it gets hot in the house, it is four or five times hotter outside.

AFTER THE FIRE PASSES:

Check the roof immediately. Extinguish any sparks or embers. Still keep the doors and windows closed in the house. Continue checking for at least six to ten hours after a fire is thought to be out.



FAMILY ESCAPE PLAN

A family should create a plan with the fastest escape routes and strategies to be used in case of fire. The following guidelines should be incorporated into your family escape plan.

Each room should have two escape routes. Bedroom and hall doors should always remain closed at night because fire can sweep up stairways and through halls with alarming speed.

A home fire alarm signal should be discussed and agreed upon by your family, such as shouts, wall banging or a whistle which can be hung on the back of beds.

GET OUT FAST! Don't stop to dress or gather valuables. Don't let the children look for a favorite toy or even the family pet and don't risk lives trying to find the source of the fire or fighting the flames yourself.

Have a common meeting place outside. This will eliminate confusion as to the whereabouts of family members and will ensure that someone does not needlessly re-enter a burning building.

Don't risk serious injury or death by jumping in panic from a window high above the ground. In case of entrapment, make sure the door to your room is closed tight, open a window a little at the top and bottom to let in some fresh air, and hang out a

sheet to signal rescuers to your location.

Windows can be used as an alternative exit. Be sure all escape route windows are low enough and large enough to climb through, that access is not blocked by furniture, that they can be easily opened – even by children; and that storm windows and screens can be easily removed.

If you live in a high rise building, plan to use stairways, never elevators. Elevators may become trapped between floors or take you directly to the fire.

LANDSCAPE FOR HOME FIRE SAFETY



Dwarf Coyote Bush



Australian or Creeping Saltbush



Creeping or Sonoma Sage

Personal property protection by the homeowner is vital in reducing the risk of destruction from a major brush fire. Two basic strategies can be used to decrease your risk.

Remove all flammable vegetation from areas adjoining your home. If possible, clear up to 100 feet from structures, especially toward prevailing winds. Remove:

- Live plants, such as conifers and chamise, containing volatile resins, oils, gums and terpenes
- Accumulations of dead twigs and branches on mature live plants.
- Leaves, pine needles and other dead vegetation on or near roofs or structures

Landscape your property with fire resistant plants. Young green plants and older plants with a high moisture content are fire resistant. Fire-resistant plants you might want to include:

"African Trailing Daisy"
"Bladderpod"
"Castle Valley Saltbush"
"Caucasian Artemisia"
"Chaparral Currant"
"Creeping Sage"
"Creeping Saltbush"
"Creeping Rosemary"
"Cypress Lavender-cotton"
"Dwarf Coyote Bush"

"Fourwing Saltbush"
"Fuschia Gooseberry"
"Gardener's Saltbush"
"Green Lavender-cotton"
"Hairy Yerba Santa"
"Hybrid Rockrose"
"Ice Plant"
"Purple Rockrose"
"Sandhill Sagebrush"
"Squaw Carpet"



Prostrate Ceanothus or Squaw Carpet



Castlevalley Saltbush



Fourwing Saltbush